



The New Jersey Amistad Commission's African American History Day Contest 2026

The New Jersey Amistad Commission is introducing a contest for elementary students to display their academic skills in Social Studies and History. This contest will highlight African American History within the context of New Jersey is designed specifically for students in **fourth and fifth grades**. The event will be held in **February 2026**.

The purpose of this contest is to develop elementary students' historical thinking skills as they connect to New Jersey's African American History. Additionally, this will serve to prepare New Jersey's elementary students for the National History Day Competitions while supporting educators in the implementation of the New Jersey Amistad Legislation through a creative avenue. Educators interested in participating will need to get board approval through your curriculum department during the current academic school year **(2024-25)**. This will allow funding for materials, transportation, etc. to be budgeted for the **(2025-26)** school year.

The goal of this contest is to align the learning journey and student projects with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards and empower students to successfully develop research, writing, public speaking and critical thinking skills through their gathering and evaluation of sources and by presenting their research.

Students can use one of the following formats to complete their projects: **Exhibit Poster, Essay (Paper), and Performance (poetry, dance, singing, skit or play)**. Students will be permitted to enter as a solo participant or in groups of two to four maximum. Each student project will require a process paper of a minimum of 100 words, maximum of 300, listing all research, including interviews or other resources.

There will be two regional locations, one for the northern and southern part of the state.

Students from the following counties will present in the:

- Northern Region (location to be determined) **(Bergen, Essex, Hunterdon, Hudson, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union, Warren.)** The event will be held at William Patterson University.
- Southern Region (location to be determined). **(Atlantic, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Burlington, Gloucester, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, Salem)**. A location to be determined will be posted in September 2025.

There is no cost to enter this contest. The Commission will only accept the first 50 projects for the northern region and the first 50 projects for the southern region.

If you are interested in participating in the competition, please email your information to:
amistadspecialprojects@doe.nj.gov

Dr. Patrick Lamy

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